

Appendix D

**REAR OPERATIONS**

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**SECTION I. GENERAL**

AirLand battle doctrine recognizes three types of operations: deep, close, and rear. Today, increased air mobility and weapons with longer ranges are coupled with tactical emphasis on striking deep into enemy territory. In an AirLand battle, this will pose an unprecedented likelihood of extensive combat action in what were previously safe rear areas. Sophisticated and highly accurate weapon systems can inflict heavy damage on both sides. Forces will direct active reconnaissance and surveillance against both forward and rear areas. Target acquisition efforts and EW will be directed against forward and rear areas on both sides. Massive troop concentrations or destructive firepower will make some penetration by both sides almost inevitable.

Unlike previous wars, in which military operations were often followed by lulls, allowing resupply and reconstitution, the next war is likely to be a continuous operation. Resupply and reconstitution will, however, be imperative. Rapid movement and replacement of troops, ammunition, and material will be critical to combat success.

**Purpose of Rear Operations**

Rear operations are conducted primarily to retain overall freedom of action in close and deep operations. Rear operations are a critical fight for the brigade commander. The AirLand battle cannot be won solely by fighting in the rear, but it could be lost there.

Rear operations are an integral part of the AirLand battle. Security and swift movement of assets behind the FEBA are crucial to combat success; therefore, rear operations must be as carefully planned and executed as all other combat operations.

Rear operations consist of those actions, including area damage control, taken by all units, singly or in a combat effort, to secure the force, neutralize or defeat enemy operations in the rear, and ensure freedom of action in deep and close operations. They form a system designed to ensure continuous support. Rear operations are not just the protection of logistics facilities. They include movement of friendly units throughout the rear area. Tactical combat forces may be required to defeat the rear threat. Rear operations may divert forces from the brigade close operation.

The brigade's rear area consists of all space behind the battalions' sectors of responsibility. This rear area is usually delineated by a specific phase line, but otherwise can be considered to begin about 8 to 10 kilometers behind the FEBA or just behind the battalions' combat trains.

### **Intelligence**

The S2 should give equal emphasis to the brigade rear and forward areas when developing the IPB. The likely axes of advance through the brigade and possible LZs and DZs must be identified. The S2 should acquire information and disseminate all intelligence concerning enemy agents, terrorists, sympathizers, and special purpose forces. Although these individuals or groups are of little to no threat to combat forces, they can devastate CS and CSS. The S2 should incorporate the MP platoon leader into his collection plan. The MP platoon can greatly assist in intelligence collection and as a liaison with the host nation. It is important that the S2 identify the enemy's target priorities in the brigade and division rear areas. Once these are identified, he analyzes ammunition transfer points, POL assets, and other critical elements that must survive to sustain the brigade.

There are three levels of threat:

- Level I. Threats that can be defeated by a base/base cluster.
- Level II. Threats beyond the capability of base/base cluster, but which can be defeated by a response force.
- Level III. Threats that necessitate the commitment of a combined arms TCF to defeat.

### **Command and Control**

The brigade commander is responsible for plans and operations throughout the depth of his operation. To execute those responsibilities, he assigns tasks to subordinate and supporting commanders. The brigade S3 includes detailed planning for the entire rear area during operational planning for offensive and defensive missions.

When the commander plans for the defense of the rear area, he needs to have complete knowledge of what elements are in his sector of responsibility. What assets does each unit have that will allow it to defend itself and identify what elements can defend against a large enemy threat? Doctrine states that most CS and CSS units in the brigade rear area are located in the BSA. Many small elements form bases, with the entire group of bases making up a BSA, which in itself is a base cluster. The BSA or base cluster is under the C2 of the FSB commander. All units in the BSA are under OPCON of the FSB commander. The FSB commander is responsible for the defense of the BSA.

The brigade commander's goal is to retain overall freedom of action for fighting close and deep operations. This means the MSR's are clear, unobstructed, and secure; units can move quickly and in an orderly fashion throughout the brigade area; logistical resupply and reconstitution are sustained and all CS and CSS units are secure. To accomplish this, there must first be an understanding of the different levels of threat.

The planning considerations for rear operations include—

- Securing the rear area and facilities.
- Preventing or minimizing enemy interference with C3.
- Preventing or minimizing disruption of CS and CSS to forward units.
- Providing unimpeded movement of friendly units throughout the rear area.
- Finding, fixing and destroying enemy incursions in the rear area.
- Providing area damage control after an attack.
- Identifying combat units, ground, and aviation (if available) that will have the on-order mission to defeat the enemy in the rear area.

## SECTION II. PLANNING FOR THE REAR AREA OPERATION

### Sustainment

The only specific asset the brigade commander has that is trained for and has the primary mission of rear area operations is the military police platoon. With their ability to shoot, move, and communicate, MPs on the battlefield provide the commander both technical and tactical advantages. Commanders can rely on MPs to help keep enemy activity in the rear area from delaying his reinforcing units and disrupting C2.

MP elements are task-organized to accomplish their missions. Size and composition of a tasked element depend on mission needs and the tactical situation. MP teams have the experience, initiative, and ability to operate independently or as part of a larger unit.

Three-man teams are the building blocks of MP units. Each MP team has a vehicle, a crew-served weapon (an M60 machine gun or a MX-19 grenade machine gun), and a vehicle-mounted radio. The team leader observes and maintains communications. A second MP drives, and the third MP is the gunner and alternate driver. They are all capable of calling for indirect FS and using light antitank weapons. The team is equipped with night-vision devices to detect NBC contamination and with equipment for secured radio communications. MP teams fight mounted or dismounted to suit the tactical situation.

In the rear area, MPs are a critical part of the commander's on-the-ground intelligence-gathering assets. They are his rear area scouts. MP teams are mobile over large geographical areas. As part of their BCC mission, MPs routinely travel the battlefield road networks. As part of their area security mission, MPs routinely move off-road for area reconnaissance and other area security operations. They help find the enemy and identify his strengths and weaknesses. MPs collect and disseminate vital information to help commanders see the battlefield. Information about conditions in the rear area and the presence and nature of the enemy helps a commander know when and where to concentrate combat power. The MP's mobility and communication assets allow them to detect and monitor activity throughout their bread AOs and report their findings quickly. Swiftly changing combat situations make timely and accurate information about the location of units, road conditions, and enemy activity imperative.

In the rear area, the MPs are a flexible economy-of-force organization that can significantly multiply the commander's combat power. MPs do this without increasing the commander's total force or diverting his combat resources from more critical operations. Because of their mobility and dispersion in the rear area, MPs are likely to be the first forces on the scene of a threat insertion in the rear area. If this occurs, MFs fight to preserve the security of the area. MPs encountering enemy forces engage them with individual and crew-served weapons. They destroy enemy elements within their capability. Organized in small tactical elements, their experienced use of initiative, their mobility and firepower, and their communications ability enable the MPs to operate independently as well as fight as part of a larger force. As squads or platoons defending a base or countering small enemy incursions, MPs generate substantial short-term combat power for the tactical commander. Though MP elements are highly mobile and are equipped for and capable of limited combat missions, the commander should carefully consider mission priorities for these valuable assets because of their small size.

The MP platoon carries out four basic missions in support of the commander and the rear operations mission. These are--

- BCC. Expediting forward and lateral movement of combat resources to ensure a way is open to move reinforcing troops, fuel, food, and ammunition across the battlefield.
- Area security. Helping the commander to provide security and protection in the rear area.
- EPW operations. Collecting, evacuating, and interning EPW to relieve the tactical commander of the responsibility.
- Law and order operations. Conducting these when necessary to extend the combat commander's discipline and control.

Any one of the above missions can easily require the entire MP platoon and more; therefore, it is important that the factors of METT-T be considered when using the platoon. It is best to keep MPs mobile, acting as the eyes and ears of the commander. During offensive operations, the MPs will most likely be employed in BCC and EPW missions. In the defense, they will be employed in BCC as area security.

### **Movement**

Maintaining security of the MSRs for swift and safe movement of units and resupplies is critical to combat mission success. To avoid locking too many MPs into this mission, use the brigade's maintenance vehicles (with caliber .50 weapons) and combat vehicles that are returning forward with supplies as security. If that is not possible, a good practice is to use no more than 50 percent of MP assets on BCC unless there is a major movement of forces.

### **Area Security**

Area reconnaissance and security will always be a primary mission for MPs. Use of the S2's IPB will be important in identifying critical terrain that needs to be kept under frequent or constant surveillance, such as LZs, DZs, and axes of advance. The MP's ability to find, fix, and destroy Level I and Level II threats will greatly decrease the commander's requirement to employ combat forces in the rear. The early detection of heavy Level II and Level III threats by MPs will allow them to at least delay, if not defeat, the enemy before he reaches the brigade's logistics assets. Ensure the MPs are sufficiently equipped with antitank capability. Use them aggressively as rear area scouts in counterreconnaissance missions to keep enemy reconnaissance out of the BSA. If the enemy force is more than the MP platoon can handle, the following contingencies should be planned for.

- Reprioritize artillery support to the rear area mission to slow the enemy until friendly combat forces make contact.
- Redirect attack helicopters or CAS to slow down or stop the enemy.
- Designate the battalions' scout platoons and/or other ground combat forces with a secondary mission of the rear operations battle.
- Coordinate assets from division or corps to assist in backup for the rear operations battle.

### **Defense of the Brigade Support Area (Base Cluster)**

Defense of the bases within the BSA and defense of the base cluster known as the BSA is an difficult ongoing task. The requirements to have the BSA located so two or three roads pass through the cluster and so it is near an MSR does not make for easy passive security. Too many reads into a BSA will decrease the commander's ability to secure the sea. When locating the BSA, the commander should take advantage of every factor that will increase his passive security.

### **Base Defense**

Each unit located in the BSA will normally be a few hundred meters from the next unit. All the units are in the BSA for the purpose of supporting the brigade. For defensive purposes, each unit will set up as individual bases. Each base must have a plan for the defense of its element, and each must integrate its defense plan with the FSB commander (base cluster commander). Each base should plan on assisting with access control duty on the main avenues entering and exiting the BSA. Those bases/units located along the BSA perimeter should plan on securing a sector of it.

It is understood that most units in the BSA have a heavy support mission and therefore have few personnel to give toward security. It is imperative that each unit have a thorough defense plan that is well rehearsed and uses everyone as an ongoing check of personnel in the area. Considerations for defense of a base include the following:

- Locate and prepare a fighting position for each individual or section in the unit.

- Everyone should immediately challenge anyone who is unfamiliar or out of place.
- Have a plan of action if the enemy has infiltrated your assembly area or base.
- Have a specific signal/alarm to order people to fighting positions.
- Have a different alarm/signal to warn that enemy forces are in the internal area. This type of alarm can cause everyone to drop to the ground and fire on anyone left standing.
- Rehearse your plan for defense-many times.
- Your plan must allow for some personnel, weapons, and equipment to be out on mission.
- Ensure you have coordinated with the bases near you.
- Soldiers with fighting positions oriented near or toward other bases must use caution when tiring weapons.
- Ensure it is understood and confirmed from which direction the BSA's reactionary force will come.
- Plan and use mobile (foot patrol) and static security. Static security is hard to detect and, therefore, effective. Mobile patrolling is an immediate deterrent for many small elements.

### **Brigade Support Area/Base Cluster Defense Considerations**

Developing and executing a defense plan for the BSA must include all those factors considered for a base, plus the following:

- In addition to the MP platoon, have a reactionary team identified and rehearsed to combat an enemy attack.
- Check each base's defensive plans-on the ground.
- Use any available engineer assets to dig in equipment and prepare fighting positions.
- Take advantage of the knowledge of the MP platoon leader/sergeant in base/base cluster defense.
- Take advantage of *all assets* in the BSA, including temporary assets such as—
  - Operable weapon systems on inoperable tracks.
  - Combat soldiers awaiting repair of vehicles.
  - Lightly wounded soldiers awaiting return to units (at the medical company).
  - Reserve combat forces.
  - Scout platoons that are not performing missions for their battalion.